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# Introduction

## DRACULA CRITICISM IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The critical response to *Dracula* has been shaped by the preoccupations of the late twentieth-century academy, arguably as much as it has been determined by the content of Bram Stoker's 1897 novel itself. Though the earliest published critical appreciations of the novel, inevitably, came at the hands of Victorian reviewers, these were characteristically dismissive of what was at the time hardly a significant literary event. Stoker, known primarily as a successful theatre manager in London's West End was, at best, a minor novelist of the day, the author of but three moderately successful romance-cum-adventure novels prior to 1897. *Dracula*, indeed, was not an immediate commercial success on the scale of *The Woman in White* (1869), by Wilkie Collins (1824–1889), an epistolary novel to which Stoker's work was favourably compared.<sup>1</sup> Less favourable reviewers disdainfully remarked upon a somewhat hyperbolic intensity of gruesome spectacle in the novel – what the *Athenaeum* termed 'a determined effort to go, as it were, "one better" than others in the same field' – and, indeed, openly castigated the author for a lapse in taste on account of his selecting a 'theme [...] quite unworthy of his literary capabilities'.<sup>2</sup>

Given that Stoker was regarded, even by his closest associates, as a writer who merely 'wrote his books to sell', it is hardly surprising that *Dracula* should be initially dismissed as nothing more than, at best, 'a first-rate book of adventure', and, at worst, an assembly of 'horrid details' crafted in such a way as to simply 'please those for whom they are designed'.<sup>3</sup> In this and other contemporary reviews of Stoker's writings, the 'lurid and creepy kind of fiction represented by *Dracula* and other novels' is marginalised due to a perceived connection with the rising mass-market.<sup>4</sup> If the reviewers of Stoker's own time are to be believed, *Dracula* answered, first and foremost, the needs of a culturally undiscerning readership hungry for narrative and spectacle. There is no acknowledgement from contemporary sources that the novel engaged with any of the issues of the day, whether these be the scandalous marital or financial abuses that characterised the tradition of the Sensation Novel, or the more rarefied literary, cultural or political questions that preoccupied the metropolitan elite at the *fin de siècle*.<sup>5</sup> For Stoker's literary contemporaries there was seemingly nothing portentous or prophetic to be found in *Dracula*. Reviewers, whether

favourable or hostile, did not acknowledge matters and interpretations central to modern criticism of the novel: the somewhat sexual postures adopted in the vampiric encounter, the racial and sexual politics of the *fin de siècle*, the question of assertive womanhood, the symbolism of blood, or even the speculations surrounding the author's own sexuality, are never considered.

Such things, of course, might be simply too obvious to require comment – or, indeed, their indelicacy could in itself motivate an eloquent silence on the part of a reticent reviewer. Their accentuation in a later century, though, might as easily suggest the power of a retrospective, as opposed to a contemporary, critical gaze. These issues, as persistent in modern criticism of *Dracula* as they are absent from contemporary reviews, arguably reflect as much the preoccupations of a later, commentating, age, as they imply a privy insight into the concerns of the past. They are an expression, in essence, of what twentieth-century criticism *understands* the motivating issues, conscious and unconscious, appropriate to a novel, an author and a culture poised uneasily on the edge of a new century, to be. The mobilisation of these issues in criticism through the relatively demotic Gothic medium of *Dracula* is equally significant. Whatever dismissive judgements have historically been passed upon its author or its generic worthiness, *Dracula* occupies a far from marginal position in the broad field of twentieth-century criticism. It is a frequently quoted work in critical debate beyond the Gothic, and has engendered its own dedicated academic journal.<sup>6</sup> It may be studied on the university curricula not merely of the English-speaking world, but also, as a compulsory element, through the *CAPES* and *Agrégation* of the French postgraduate system.<sup>7</sup> It is a novel worthy of translation and of meticulous scholarly annotation.<sup>8</sup> The persistence of *Dracula* in criticism is in part a consequence of the ease with which its incidents, and the issues conventionally associated with them, may be progressively appropriated by emerging theories and critical methodologies. Yet, perversely, the lingering ephemerality of the novel remains an important factor in its rise to critical attention. *Dracula*, indeed, may serve not merely as an index to the application of specific critical methodologies from the 1960s to the present, but may equally indicate how criticism, as a broad movement, has moved from a preoccupation with a limited canon of elite, 'literary' authors to a more inclusive liberal discipline whose boundaries touch upon those of cultural studies.<sup>9</sup>

The twenty-first century's interest in the nineteenth-century *fin de siècle*, and the pre-Millennium critical tradition of exposing the alleged neuroses of the Victorian period, both have their origins in how the twentieth century has conventionally viewed its immediate predecessor in time. For much of the twentieth century, 'Victorian' was a byword for little more than excessive formality, inflexible hierarchies

and an intrusive morality which, nevertheless, could be easily dismissed as a comic prudishness typified by corsetry and concealed table legs. Cultural changes in the 1960s, however, as the French thinker Michel Foucault (1926–1984) intimates in Volume 1 of *The History of Sexuality* (1976), politicised the very concept of the Victorian, permitting it to be deployed as a rhetorical counterpart to all that is ‘liberated’ or ‘modern’.<sup>10</sup> The ‘progressive’ credentials of modernity, in other words, whether expressed in academic writing or in a more general cultural consciousness, are established, in part at least, upon a discursive ability both to recognise and openly express issues that could be communicated in the past only by way of an elaborate process of encoding.

This institutionalised reassurance that modernity is ‘liberated’ may be, as Foucault suggests, illusory, but its overwhelming consequence is the concretisation of those associations which link the Victorian past in particular with repression and with indirect communication of distasteful or controversial issues. The current location of *Dracula* within criticism, and the accentuation of particular issues – and not exclusively sexual issues – apparently embedded within the narrative of Stoker’s novel, are equally a consequence of this cultural moment. In the twentieth century, the ephemeral *Dracula* has come to be read as a text as much in tune with the pessimistic spirit of the *fin de siècle* as its close contemporaries, *Degeneration* (1892) by Max Nordau (1849–1923) and the poem ‘Recessional’ (1897) by Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936). *Dracula* is no longer what it arguably was in 1897, simply ‘one of the most weird and gruesome tales of modern times’.<sup>11</sup> It is now a text that can seemingly be approached only through subsequent times, a novel whose critically accepted meanings both preface it and condition its reception, a quintessentially Victorian work whose preoccupations are apparently not wholly nineteenth century.

## **DRACULA CRITICISM IN THE TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES**

There is no clear chronological succession to the criticism of *Dracula*, no distinct demarcation indicating the rise and fall of consecutive critical approaches following the entry of the novel into academic consciousness at the close of the 1950s. The criticism of *Dracula*, though subject to fashions in academic methodology, appears to defy the irretrievable changes associated with the passage of time as much as Stoker’s fictional Count. Earlier assessments of the novel are often reprinted, anthologised or excerpted in their own right. Quoted briefly or at length, they form the starting point for many a rejoinder to, or expansion of, material already in circulation. Crucially, though, the novel continues to inspire critics publishing across the methodological spectrum, from Psychoanalysis to

Cultural Materialism, and from the most abstract theory to the densest of textual or structural analyses. Thus *Dracula* remains a novel suspended in critical coexistence, the Count a different vampire to every commentator, the novel's events variously literal or symbolic, repressed or liberated, as the critic's theoretical orientation directs. Read critically, *Dracula* is always a palimpsest of theoretical opinions, a point at which methodologies converge, compete and combine.

The earliest theoretical readings of *Dracula* were heavily influenced by Freudian thought, the novel first being read within a larger psychoanalytical exploration of the ghost story by Maurice Richardson in 1959. Seldom reprinted, though frequently cited, Richardson's 'The Psychoanalysis of Ghost Stories' effectively establishes many of the psychological tools – and, indeed, the key scenarios – which have characterised subsequent psychoanalytical and post-Freudian readings of the novel.<sup>12</sup> The Oedipal relationships noted by Richardson, for example, are developed at greater length and with more felicity by Phyllis Roth in both her 1977 article 'Suddenly Sexual Women in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*' and in her 1982 volume *Bram Stoker*. Similarly, Richardson's interest in totemism prefigures David Punter's subtle evocation of the boundary lines maintained through taboo in his short reading of *Dracula* in *The Literature of Terror* (1980), one of the most influential works in the development of Gothic from a literary curiosity into a discrete – and accepted – discipline within English studies. Richardson, finally, is also a pioneer in the application of psychobiography – the neurotic and unconscious history, as it were, of the author – in the criticism of *Dracula*. The article's passing suggestion of a father fixation within Stoker's psyche, associated with the author's employer, the actor-manager Sir Henry Irving (1838–1905), appears somewhat modest, however, when compared to later readings, such as those by Joseph Bierman and Daniel Lapin, which premise the novel's horrors upon childhood illness and infantile sexual abuse.<sup>13</sup>

Sexuality, of course, lies at the centre of Freudian criticism, and its implications, attractions and repulsions have been appropriated to the criticism of *Dracula* from the psychoanalytically orthodox 1970s to more recent analyses influenced by the French revisionist psychoanalysis of Jacques Lacan (1901–1981) and Julia Kristeva (born 1941).<sup>14</sup> One might recall, though, that sexuality, perverse or otherwise, has a cultural as much as a psychoanalytical identity, and that this has been explored in its own right – at times in reaction to the claims of psychoanalysis. This coexistence has been apparent from the earliest years of the critical response to *Dracula*. C. F. Bentley's influential 1972 article 'The Monster in the Bedroom: Sexual Symbolism in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*' might, like Richardson's 'The Psychoanalysis of Ghost Stories', depend upon the 1931 psychoanalytical study *On the Nightmare* by Freud's biographer, Ernest Jones (1879–1958), though Carol L. Fry's 'Fictional Conventions

and Sexuality in *Dracula*, published in the same year, is premised upon an approach far more grounded in the acknowledged cultures of literature rather than the repressed drives of the psyche.<sup>15</sup> Other preoccupations recurrent in the criticism of *Dracula* were also established at this comparatively early stage of the novel's presence in critical discourse. Christopher Craft's frequently reprinted 1984 reading of ambiguous gender boundaries in the novel, "'Kiss me with those red lips': Gender and Inversion in Stoker's *Dracula*" might be compared with later works in the field of queer studies, such as H. L. Malchow's consideration of homosociality in *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (1996), or Talia Schaffer's 'A Wilde Desire Took Me: The Homoerotic History of *Dracula*' in 1994.<sup>16</sup>

The relationships and identities portrayed within *Dracula*, and the changes that are undergone when a mortal encounters a vampire, appear to lend themselves readily to sexual symbolism. A note of caution might be extracted, though, from the somewhat revisionist work of Robert Mighall, the rhetoric of which at times makes clear its historicist antagonism to the perceived primacy of psychoanalytical and sexual readings of both the novel and the figure of the vampire.<sup>17</sup> 'A vampire', Mighall notes provocatively, 'is sometimes only a vampire'.<sup>18</sup> A vampire need not always be a sexual deviant, nor indeed need the novel itself be the exclusive preserve of a critical establishment which, Foucault might well have suggested, has become fixated upon expressing sexuality.

Sexuality, sexual identity and cultural gendering intersect in the discipline of Gender Studies, where *Dracula*, unsurprisingly, is a text frequently encountered in criticism. As a consequence of the earlier association of Gender Studies primarily with explorations of the depiction and consumption of women in culture, the earliest readings of *Dracula* in this field focus upon the novel's two central mortal female protagonists, Lucy Westenra and Mina Harker, with some attention being directed also to the Count's three apparent brides in Transylvania. Emphasis has long been placed in particular upon how the onset of vampirism provokes a state of mind in the victim that might be read as a sexual and social liberation, a departure, in other words, from the modest standards of a clichéd Victorian bourgeois culture underpinned by proprietary patriarchy. In this context, one might note the particular relevance of the New Woman, a much-maligned protofeminist figure of the *fin de siècle*, named with scorn more than once in Stoker's novel. The New Woman has been a recurrent feature of the criticism of *Dracula* from 1982, with Carol Senf's groundbreaking article 'Dracula: Stoker's Response to the New Woman' and, as more recent considerations from divergent critical standpoints by Sally Ledger and Marie Mulvey-Roberts would indicate, this disquieting figure seems likely to retain her critical currency.<sup>19</sup>

The study of the representation of Victorian masculinities within *Dracula* is not confined to readings premised upon queer theory. The homosocial embraces professional cultures as much as socio-sexual ones, and recent studies have therefore taken time to explore the implications of the characters' involvements with the institutions of law and medicine, professions with which Stoker was himself associated.<sup>20</sup> Medicine, as a discourse, is acknowledged also in the study of the physical and social, as opposed to simply sexual, deviance depicted in *Dracula*, attention being drawn from the mid-1980s to the novel's embodiment of the racial, cultural and criminological theories of Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909) and Max Nordau.<sup>21</sup> Subsequent exploration of these theories would seem to indicate that atavism and scarce-contained savagery are the alternative faces of the domesticated Gentleman.<sup>22</sup> They are the faces, too, of the alien as both potential invader and successful colonist: *Dracula* has, from as early as the 1990s, been interpreted as a fearful warning of the vulnerability of the Anglo-Saxon West to the seductive and infectious East.<sup>23</sup>

Biography – sometimes, admittedly, in the guise of psychobiography – has been an important resource in gendered readings of *Dracula*, whether through the application of documented evidence with regard to the author's early education or personal politics, or in the more speculative form of assertions about the state of his marriage or sexual health.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, biographical details have at times supported most, if not all, of the debates associated with the novel. There is perhaps no single area, though, where biography has been most relevantly deployed as in the comparatively recent appropriation of *Dracula*, and indeed of Stoker as a writer, by Irish Studies. Irish Studies has been quick to expand upon Franco Moretti's 1983 contention that the Count emblematises an exploitative capitalism, an influential development of this being the interpretation of the vampire as an absentee landlord or colonial – and thus, in the Irish context, English – predator.<sup>25</sup> The East, in this case, is perversely rescheduled as imperial Britain, the conventional West of other colonial interpretations. Though ignored by Irish Studies for many years, Stoker is now arguably as institutionalised within the discipline as two other important Protestant Anglo-Irish Gothicists, the novelist and playwright Charles Robert Maturin (1782–1824) and the novelist and short-story writer J. S. Le Fanu (1814–1873). A persistent critical perception of Stoker as, in Joseph Valente's words, 'an ethnic social climber' seeking celebrity and success in the English capital has, however, undoubtedly compromised his status as a writer portraying a distinctively Irish cultural consciousness.<sup>26</sup>

It may be observed that much of the debate concerning *Dracula* has been conducted at relatively short length, rather than in the more

expansive pages of the academic monograph. Though there are rare exceptions, criticism of Stoker's novel is emphatically the stuff of the academic journal, the discrete paper within a multi-authored collection of essays, or the chapter forming a component of a larger monograph under a single hand. While it is true to say that very few scholarly books have been published primarily upon *Dracula*, it must be acknowledged that many of these have exerted a lasting influence over both students approaching the novel as undergraduates, and critics responding to the debate as it appears in print. Rarely acknowledged in academic discourse today, Raymond McNally and Radu Florescu's somewhat populist *In Search of Dracula* (1972) was possibly the first book to provide the novel with a historical context, albeit one that privileged its alleged roots in sixteenth-century rather than Victorian culture. Stoker's novel itself is relevant to perhaps but a quarter of this work, which considers also the cinematic and folkloric vampire. Central to *In Search of Dracula* is a biography of Vlad the Impaler (1431–1476), historically styled 'Dracula' – variously 'Son of the Dragon', or 'Son of the Devil' – a Wallachian ruler whom the authors argue is the model for the Count.<sup>27</sup> Speculation on this identity, alternatively calmly scholarly and frenetically vitriolic, continues to this day. The relevance of this issue to the purely academic study of the novel, though, is debatable.<sup>28</sup>

Ten years after *In Search of Dracula*, Phyllis Roth published an important short volume, *Bram Stoker* (1982), the first detailed study of the breadth of the author's fiction. Written for the Twayne's English Authors Series, this psychoanalytically orientated survey divided Stoker's then largely unreprinted novels and short fiction into children's stories, romances, horror stories and, in a category of its own, *Dracula*. Roth's study upheld, and possibly concretised, the limited selection of key scenes from the novel that had already been made by earlier critics, emphasising in particular the menacing of Jonathan, the ritual despatch of Lucy, and the victimisation of Mina. However, it enhanced their application somewhat by linking them to other – for Roth psychologically significant – recurrent images across Stoker's *oeuvre*.

Roth's work was succeeded within three years by a far more methodologically disparate work, Clive Leatherdale's *Dracula: The Novel and the Legend* (1985). Leatherdale's work is divided into 11 chapters which provided a condensation of how the criticism of *Dracula* had evolved in 25 years: whilst acknowledging the psychoanalytical and sexual readings which had been fashionable for some time, Leatherdale's work took care to acknowledge the literary and folkloric background to the vampire, to chart an emerging awareness of Christian and occult symbolism in Stoker's novel, to consider the representation of both genders, and to read *Dracula* as a social and political commentary. Revised more than once, *Dracula: The Novel and the Legend* remains a

good introduction to the breadth of approaches, though its ambition is somewhat undermined by Leatherdale's insistence that Stoker is 'a hack writer who in one solitary work wrote as if inspired'.<sup>29</sup>

Leatherdale enforces his dismissal of Stoker's allegedly 'hack' status through his concentration on *Dracula* to the relative exclusion of the author's ten less well known novels. This is not the approach taken, however, by his major monograph-length successors in criticism, all of whom have followed Phyllis Roth's early lead in both considering *Dracula* in comparison to Stoker's other novels, and exploring these as valid works in their own right. David Glover's *Vampires, Mummies, and Liberals: Bram Stoker and the Politics of Popular Fiction* (1996) might itself be taken as an index of the critical consciousness associated with *Dracula* in the ten years following Leatherdale's *Dracula: The Novel and the Legend*. Glover's work, though acutely aware of the gender politics and sexuality of Stoker's fiction, is tempered by a thoughtful and subtly biographical reading of the Victorian author's avowedly Liberal politics and involvement in a more broadly liberal culture.<sup>30</sup> Beyond this, Glover applies the discourses of ethnology, sexology and criminal anthropology – the latter, admittedly, having been developed earlier in criticism by Ernest Fontana, Victor Sage, Daniel Pick and others – not merely to *Dracula* but also, as the thematic organisation of *Vampires, Mummies, and Liberals* betrays, to the Irish politics of Stoker's fiction, to the New Woman and to the racial (and racist) tenor of the novels.<sup>31</sup> Glover concludes his study by returning to the vexed question of the lineage between McNally's sixteenth-century warlord and Stoker's fictional Count. His study is unique, though, in its consideration of the portrayal of Count Dracula in twentieth-century vampire fiction, in Hollywood cinema, and in the political mythologies associated with the Romanian communist regime of Nicolae Ceaușescu (1919–1989; President of Romania, 1974–89).

Published four years after *Vampires, Mummies, and Liberals*, William Hughes's *Beyond Dracula: Bram Stoker's Fiction and its Cultural Context* (2000) also considers the breadth of Stoker's fiction. Foucauldian in temper and biographically informed, it examines the Protestant spirituality of Stoker's works, the discourses, social and scientific, which structure the portrayal of male and female in the fiction and, with particular reference to *Dracula*, the author's deployment of contemporary medical and quasi-medical thought. As in Roth's psychobiographical *Bram Stoker* (1982), characteristic patterns in both incident and characterisation are noted across the author's fiction. These are projected, however, beyond the scenarios most often encountered in criticism, and are supported by contemporary reviews and unpublished archive material, in the form of letters and manuscripts, held in Britain and the United States.

The most recent monograph-length contribution to the debate, Carol Senf's *Science and Social Science in Bram Stoker's Fiction* (2002) must be taken in the context of her earlier *Dracula: Between Tradition and Modernism* (1998). Despite its subtitle, the latter is a work concerned less with genre than with close readings of the novel's major incidents and preoccupations. Following a contextual opening, which acknowledges both biography and literary antecedent, Senf reads *Dracula* through narrative strategy, empire, gender, religion, science and technology and social class. The separate chapters are succinct and the novel rather than criticism, arguably, is the primary focus of Senf's study, which is surprisingly little known outside the United States. *Science and Social Science in Bram Stoker's Fiction*, as its title suggests, considers a broader range of Stoker's writings, including the author's non-fiction. Senf develops further the distinction, expressed in her earlier volume, between science and technology, and her ethical vision of science as 'a neutral field that can be used for both fair means and foul' in many respects recalls Stoker's own consideration of literature as 'imagination – itself pure', a 'neutral' quantum which might yet be 'sullied' through the expression of 'impure or dangerous material'.<sup>32</sup>

Stoker's novel, likewise, has also found itself coloured over the years by the myriad critical interpretations imposed upon it. In the twenty-first century, *Dracula* no longer exists independently of competing interpretations striving to impose their own distinctive control and explanation over this apparent intersection of cultural and individual signification. Yet, what should be apparent from this introductory survey is that criticism of *Dracula* does not divide itself neatly into separate theoretical camps, each operating in relative ignorance of the other, or into discrete or successive methodological epochs. *Dracula*, as has already been suggested, remains the fulcrum-text of a vibrant confluence of older work and more recent studies. The enhanced availability of much of this material – through new or reprinted collections, by way of on-line archives or via simultaneous on-line and hard-copy publication of new work – underpins a sizeable resource for the student working on Stoker's novel from undergraduate to graduate-researcher level.<sup>33</sup> Just as there is no abiding justification for the mobilisation of a limited range of scenarios or characters from the novel in criticism, so too is there no reason for a critical response that draws only upon the best-known and most frequently encountered scholarly readings.

## THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF BRAM STOKER

As has already been suggested, biography is perhaps the only single extra-textual resource upon which almost all critiques of *Dracula* – psychological

and materialist alike – have drawn at one time or another. A great deal of half-truth and often unchallenged misinformation parallels the documentary facts of Stoker's life, and though a full biography is beyond the remit of this *Reader's Guide*, some acknowledgement of verifiable incidents in Stoker's youth and adulthood will serve to both preface and contextualise the following survey of twentieth-century biographers, as well as the criticism which they in many cases inform.

Abraham Stoker junior, the third of seven children, was born on 8 November 1847 at 15, The Crescent, Clontarf, County Dublin. He was a sickly child who, by his own admission, was not expected to live.<sup>34</sup> Educated first at home, presumably as a consequence of this undefined weakness, he was subsequently enrolled in a private Dublin day school run by the Reverend William Woods, a Protestant clergyman. The family was Anglican in religion, moderately Unionist in political allegiance, and Anglo-Irish in cultural temper, the author's father being a member of the British civil administration in Ireland and his mother the daughter of an army officer.<sup>35</sup> The family had historical connections to the Irish medical establishment, and these were perpetuated through three of the author's brothers who embraced surgery as a profession. Stoker, who matriculated as an undergraduate at Trinity College Dublin on 2 November 1864, did not, however, read medicine. Despite his own claim that he 'had got Honours in pure Mathematics', he was awarded an ordinary degree of Bachelor in Arts on 1 March 1870, and was admitted to the degree of Master in Arts without further study, as was customary at the University of Dublin, on 9 February 1875.<sup>36</sup> It is not the case, despite one twentieth-century biographer's insistence, that he graduated 'with a degree in science and stayed on for a Master's'.<sup>37</sup> Stoker's knowledge of science, as evidenced by his later fiction, is the result of enthusiasm and wide reading rather than guided, professional training.

Though academically unexceptional, Stoker's career at the University of Dublin was distinguished both by his prowess as a university athlete and by his ability in the debating chamber. He played competitive rugby football, and was awarded 'numerous silver cups' for both athletics and competitive weightlifting in the university gymnasium.<sup>38</sup> Stoker became President of the University's Philosophical Society in 1869, and was elected Auditor of the rival Historical Society, 'a post which corresponds to the Presidency of the Union in Oxford or Cambridge', in 1872.<sup>39</sup> He delivered papers at both societies, and was awarded certificates and medals for oratory. More subtly, though, he gained access to the main debates and many of the more important Irish intellectual figures of the day, many of whom were honorary members of the societies, or addressed their gatherings as honoured guests. Among his associates at this time were the future Irish historian

Standish O'Grady (1832–1915), the pioneering professor of English, Edward Dowden (1843–1913), and the family of Oscar Wilde (1854–1900). No evidence exists, however, that he was associated with J. Sheridan Le Fanu, author of both the influential *Uncle Silas* (1864) and the short vampire story 'Carmilla' (1871).

After his graduation Stoker maintained a connection with both university organisations, attending meetings and delivering occasional papers or responses. In 1870 he was appointed to a Civil Service post in Dublin Castle, an easy walk, for a fit man, from Trinity College. Though it appears his Anglo-Irish origins may have inhibited his progress in an Ireland struggling to accommodate an educated and vocal Roman Catholic bourgeoisie, Stoker was appointed to the office of Inspector of Petty Sessions in 1877.<sup>40</sup> In this office he wrote and published, at his own expense, the legal work *Duties of Clerks of Petty Sessions in Ireland* (1879); became, from 1871, an unpaid theatre critic; and edited, on a part-time basis in 1873, a short-lived popular newspaper, *The Irish Echo*.

It was in the second of these part-time literary occupations that Stoker met the man who was to persuade him to leave both Dublin and the security of a salaried and pensioned government post. Henry Irving, on his visit to Dublin in 1867, was a rising English actor and stage manager with an established reputation in the provinces and a growing popularity in London. He was, though, variously ignored or decried for his 'stiff and constrained' acting by the Irish press on both this and his subsequent visits in 1871 and 1872.<sup>41</sup> On 3 December 1876, Irving, to whom Stoker had been earlier introduced, included him in a private recitation of the dramatic poem *The Dream of Eugene Aram* (1829) by Thomas Hood (1799–1845). Irving was exhausted by his efforts, but Stoker exhibited a collapse which can only be considered as a form of emotional seizure, 'something', in his own words, 'like a violent fit of hysterics'. Stoker's subsequent rationalisation of the encounter is, at once, as sentimentally eulogistic as it is perversely homoerotic. Depicting himself as 'a very strong man', a university athlete who emblematises the masculine standard of *mens sana in corpore sano* (a healthy mind in a healthy body), he yet exclaims, 'Soul had looked into soul! From that hour began a friendship as profound, as close, as lasting as can be between two men.'<sup>42</sup>

This friendship, as Stoker perceived it to be, developed in such a way that in 1878 Irving invited the young civil servant to join him in London as Acting Manager of the Lyceum Theatre in the Strand. Stoker brought forward his marriage to Florence Ann Lemon Balcombe (1858–1937), the daughter of an army officer, in order to facilitate his transfer to London, where the Stokers moved first to fashionable Chelsea, retreating to Pimlico in later years as their finances became more stretched.<sup>43</sup> A son, Irving Noel Thornley Stoker, whose first and third Christian

names commemorate the actor and Stoker's elder brother, a successful surgeon, respectively, was born in December 1879. The author was to retain his position, which made him effectively Irving's accountant, secretary and public spokesman for 27 years, until the actor's death in 1905. During this time, Stoker drafted a vast amount of correspondence, ghost-wrote speeches and articles for his employer, and oversaw the logistics of eight theatrical tours by the Irving company in the United States. He also qualified as a barrister, but never practiced law.

The majority of Stoker's works were completed on a part-time basis during this arduous and often unsocial employment. His fictional output had begun in Dublin, with the publication of a short fantasy story, 'The Crystal Cup' in the English journal, *London Society*, in 1872. Three years later, he published three serials in an Irish periodical, *The Shamrock*, though his first book production was to come only in 1882 with *Under the Sunset*, a collection of somewhat macabre short stories for children, released to catch the lucrative Christmas market. The author's fiction prior to *Dracula*, barring one or two macabre shorter pieces, was romantic rather than Gothic in tone, and depended much on exotic or spectacular geographical locations: the west of Ireland in his first novel, *The Snake's Pass* (1882), Aberdeenshire in *The Watter's Mou'* (1894), and the locality of Mount Shasta in California in *The Shoulder of Shasta* (1895). *Dracula* (1897) appears to have been reviewed no more nor less than any of these novels, and its Gothicism does not seem to have eclipsed Stoker's undoubted taste for the heterosexual romance: *Miss Betty*, published a year later, is an eighteenth-century love story set near the author's then-home in Chelsea's Cheyne Walk. Only three subsequent novels were researched and written prior to Irving's death and, it has to be said, these do return to the balance of Gothic with romance displayed in *Dracula*. *The Mystery of the Sea* (1902) is a religiously sectarian tale of second sight, kidnap and treasure hunting on the Aberdeenshire coast; *The Jewel of Seven Stars* (1903) is a novel of ritual and resurrection, set in Egypt, London and Cornwall; and *The Man* (1905), which shifts location between the English shires, the colleges of Oxford and the Canadian wilderness, is a rather anachronistic Edwardian riposte to the Victorian feminism of the New Woman.

Though the Lyceum itself had passed beyond the control of its lessee, Irving, in 1899, the actor's popularity remained relatively buoyant even in the new century. Though Irving attracted the scorn of, amongst others, George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950), for his resistance to the 'problem' dramas of the Norwegian playwright and poet Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906), the provincial audience was more indulgent of an actor who continued to balance essentially Victorian melodramas with reputable Shakespearean productions. Irving's death whilst on tour in 1905 inevitably heralded a watershed in Stoker's own career. The author's regular, if diminished,

income from his management of the actor ceased, and he was forced both to look for alternative work and to rely frequently on his pen as a source of funds.

This period, between 1905 and 1912, was a time of both physical debilitation and great literary productivity for Stoker. The author succumbed to a paralytic stroke in 1906, followed by a second in 1909, and had long suffered from both gout and Bright's Disease, a disorder particularly affecting the kidneys.<sup>44</sup> During the first of these illnesses, remarkably, he researched and wrote his biography of the late actor, *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* (1906). It was a pattern of struggle and achievement that was to continue until his death. In these seven years, he wrote topical articles for London journals on the theatre, fiction and Irish industry. For *The Daily Chronicle*, Stoker published interviews with old associates such as the creator of Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (1859–1930); the librettist of the Savoy operas, W. S. Gilbert (1836–1911); and the future British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill (1874–1965). He also completed a volume of theatrically framed short stories, *Snowbound*, in 1908 and a non-fictional study of imposture, *Famous Impostors*, in 1910. Relatively little short fiction, beyond *Snowbound*, was published by Stoker in this period, though he researched and wrote a further three novels: *Lady Athlyne*, a romance alternatively farcical and erotic, in 1908; *The Lady of the Shroud*, a *faux* vampire novel embodying a Ruritanian political fantasy in 1909; and *The Lair of the White Worm*, an erratic and meandering novel of mesmerism and physical metamorphosis in 1911. A further collection of short stories, *Dracula's Guest and Other Weird Stories*, was issued posthumously by his widow in 1914. It is a critical commonplace that, as Peter Haining and Peter Tremayne put it, all of these works 'fall far short of the standards he had set in his vampire novel'.<sup>45</sup>

Bram Stoker died at his home, 26 St George's Square, Pimlico, London, on 20 April 1911. The author's estate, with a gross value of £4,723, according to the annotations made upon the officially archived copy of his will, was bequeathed to his wife, who survived him by 26 years. He was cremated following a short service at Golders Green, London, attended by, among others, the Manx novelist Hall Caine (1853–1931), dedicatee of *Dracula*, the novelist and editor Ford Madox Hueffer (later Ford; 1873–1939), and the actress Genevieve Ward (1837–1922).<sup>46</sup>

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CRITICISM

Stoker's six major biographers express this raw data in widely different ways, a consequence in part of the historical periods in which their work was published and the disciplines out of which they were writing.

Hence, Harry Ludlam's pioneering *A Biography of Dracula* (1962) was, as its subtitle suggests, simply *The Life Story of Bram Stoker*, a non-controversial narrative for a 'fireside' readership distant from the cultural turmoil of the Swinging Sixties.<sup>47</sup> Its successor, *The Man Who Wrote Dracula* (1975), written by Stoker's great-nephew, Daniel Farson (1927–1997), was, in contrast, a product both of that era and of its author's connections with broadcasting. Farson, notably, introduced the theme of sexual guilt to Stoker's biography, though such speculations had already gained a place in academic criticism. The style of Barbara Belford's *Bram Stoker: A Biography of the Author of Dracula* (1996), again, owes much to its American author's background in journalism. Though this was the first biography of Stoker to support its assertions with anything approaching an academic standard of referencing and quotation, it is still marred by occasional inaccuracies, and, indeed, by a number of imaginative evocations of intimate scenes or unrecorded conversations in Stoker's private life, including the unspoken thoughts of his preoccupied mind.<sup>48</sup> The author's most recent biographers, Peter Haining and Peter Tremayne (*The Un-Dead: The Legend of Bram Stoker and Dracula*, 1997) and Paul Murray (*From the Shadow of Dracula: A Life of Bram Stoker*, 2004) have maintained both a high standard of scholarly research, and, for the most part, of referencing. Both biographies are particularly strong on the Irish contexts of Stoker's works, reflecting the gradual incorporation of Stoker into the Irish Studies canon from the 1990s. Murray's work, in particular, benefits from a sympathetic access to Stoker family papers not realised, particularly, in Belford's work.

As the titles and subtitles of their works betray, all of Stoker's biographers share an underlying commitment to the centrality of *Dracula* – to Stoker's authorial career, certainly, but also implicitly or explicitly, as some sort of key to his wider life. If the criticism of *Dracula*, though, has become characteristically dependent upon a limited range of scenes from the novel, so, too, has the author's life been distilled down to a number of specific incidents emphasised in biography and deployed frequently in criticism. These incidents are, chronologically, Stoker's youthful illness; his relationship with Irving; his apparently troubled marriage to Florence Balcombe; and his final illness and death. Other matters have, certainly, been utilised in biography – W. N. Osborough, for example, has chronicled Stoker's hitherto neglected civil service career, Leslie Shepard has briefly recounted some of the contents of the author's library, and other writers have accounted for his time at Whitby and in Scotland – though these have enjoyed none of the topical longevity of the four issues outlined above.<sup>49</sup>

Stoker's youthful illness is recalled without explanation in his *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* (1906). 'In my babyhood', the author notes, 'I used, I understand to be, [*sic*] often at the point of death. Certainly till

I was about seven years old I never knew what it was to stand upright'.<sup>50</sup> This statement is accorded little significance in Ludlam's work, though speculation upon a likely psychological cause begins with Farson's account of his great-uncle.<sup>51</sup> Belford expands gleefully upon Stoker's undefined disorder, accentuating the illness as 'a pivotal turning point, forever marking his destiny', claiming that the author's reticence 'points to a secretive nature', and contending that his 'childhood fantasies bred adult nightmares'.<sup>52</sup>

Psychobiographical writers have taken even more advantage of the tantalising vagueness of Stoker's illness. Though, as he admits, no evidence exists that Stoker was ever hospitalised or subjected to surgical blood-letting, Seymour Shuster (1973) argues that the vampire 'basically represents a child's perception of the surgeon who operates upon him'.<sup>53</sup> More explicitly theoretical in nature are the two distinctive contributions to the debate forwarded, in 1972 and 1998 respectively, by Joseph Bierman. In '*Dracula*: Prolonged Childhood Illness and the Oral Triad' (1972), Bierman draws on the concept of the Oral Triad – 'the wish to eat, to be eaten and to sleep' – developed by the psychoanalyst Bertram D. Lewin (1896–1971). *Dracula*, for Bierman, is a consequence of the author's youthful sibling rivalry, the desire to displace the child who has replaced him at the maternal breast being translated, because of his physical prostration, into oral expression rather than physical aggression. This psychological trauma was, Bierman argues, regenerated in adulthood through the knighthoods conferred in 1895 by Queen Victoria (1819–1901; reigned 1837–1901) upon Irving and the author's elder brother, William Thornley Stoker (1845–1912). Bram Stoker, it seems, never quite dissipated his childhood frustrations, and even in *Dracula* could express them, at best, only obliquely.<sup>54</sup>

Bierman returned to Lewin's Oral Triad 16 years later in 'A Crucial Stage in the Writing of *Dracula*' (1998). In this study, the novel is still a working through of childhood insecurities, where the empty graves of the Whitby churchyard and the port's enclosed harbour reflect an enclosed space or *claustrum*, 'the interior of the mother's body, an orally regressive safe haven from anxieties, especially sexual anxieties'. Whitby, for Bierman, represents a regression to a childhood fantasy of the prenatal state as a place of safety: to be eaten is to be taken, in fantasy, from the breast into the womb, where one may sleep without fear. The perverse implication of Lewin's theory, though, is neglected by Bierman: it is the vampire that gains entry to both the harbour and the tomb, and it is the vampire which represents a phallic father eternally producing siblings to displace their forbears. Surely, it might be suggested, if this is the case, the novel cannot truly be said to represent a retreat to a pre-sexual space that is both 'safe and satisfying'.<sup>55</sup> The problem with psychobiographical accounts such as those by Shuster and

Bierman is their dependence upon, on the one hand, classic universal scenarios – orality, sibling rivalry, oedipality – and on the other a quantum of data which is far from comprehensive. The balance between biography, speculative biography and fictional-text-as-biography is a difficult one to maintain with absolute conviction in a modern age which is as fixated upon ‘facts – bare, meagre facts, verified by books and figures’ as that of the fictional Jonathan Harker (35).

Stoker’s relationship with Henry Irving is, similarly, subject to myth and speculation. Irving was undoubtedly a charismatic actor, and Stoker was a willing participant in the media’s love affair with the first professional stage player to be knighted by a British monarch. Irving’s popularity brought, in turn, publicity for Stoker himself, in his capacity as the public face of the Lyceum Theatre. He was depicted beside Irving in affectionate cartoons published by the stage press, gently mocked as the actor’s ‘Faithful Bram’ or more seriously recognised as the faithful companion or ‘*fidus achates* to a great personality’.<sup>56</sup> This relationship has, however, not always been regarded in such an idealised light by those intimate to the two participants. The actor’s grandson, writing in 1951, suggested that Stoker ‘worshipped Irving with all the sentimental idolatry of which an Irishman is capable’. More tellingly, according to the Stoker’s granddaughter, the author’s own son, himself named after the actor, ‘seemed to dislike Irving’ and ‘thought that Irving had worn Bram out’.<sup>57</sup> Noel Stoker never willingly used his first name, Irving, and his attributed opinion arguably supports the contention of those critics and biographers who see in Irving a prototype for the vampire Count. ‘*Dracula* is all about Irving as the vampire’, Barbara Belford suggests. Likewise, for Maurice Hindle, the writing of *Dracula* signals the start of ‘a programme of (unconscious) fictional revenge upon his adored Master [...] Henry Irving’.<sup>58</sup>

All of this dovetails nicely with those Freudian interpretations of *Dracula* which see in the novel an autobiographical expression of ambivalence towards a father-figure who is both admired and feared for his strength, and who currently retains a particular level of control over a desired female entourage. This is not as crudely oedipal as one might expect. For Belford, such unconscious drives are manifested in *Dracula* through a scripting of Irving as the Count and Ellen Terry (1847–1928), the actor’s leading lady and reputed lover, as ‘the unattainable good woman’, Mina.<sup>59</sup> Elsewhere, Royce MacGillivray, clearly influenced by Maurice Richardson’s insistence upon Stoker’s ‘unusually strong father fixation’ and his references to Freud’s *Totem and Taboo* (1913), detects a theme of parricide in the novel. This is a counterpart, it has to be said, to an equally speculative Cain-and-Abel fratricide, specifically associated with Irving, raised in Joseph Bierman’s evocation of the Oral Triad in the same year.<sup>60</sup> Stoker’s own father, whom he seems to have admired

and respected, scarcely enters into the equation at all. If there is a 'father fixation' in Stoker's character, then his taste was certainly for the exceptional rather than the homely; this would seem to be supported by his documented admiration of a variety of older male figures, including Benjamin Disraeli (1804–1881), Conservative Prime Minister in 1868 and 1874–80; W. E. Gladstone (1809–1891), Liberal Prime Minister in 1864–74, 1880–85, 1886 and 1892–94; Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809–1892), Poet Laureate from 1850; the pioneering American poet Walt Whitman (1819–1892), author of *Leaves of Grass* (1855); and the explorer, diplomat and translator, Sir Richard Burton (1821–1890). Stoker, depicted as isolated and an outsider in many biographical readings, might well be regarded as one who displaced and dissipated his own sense of mundane isolation – as a sick child in Clontarf, as an Irishman in London – by way of the more spectacular Otherness exhibited by those regarded as exceptional in political, physical or artistic stature.<sup>61</sup> His fantasies, quite possibly, were not those of parricide, but rather of a reflected glory, similar to that which he enjoyed in the shadow of Irving. Stoker, it could easily be argued, lacked confidence in his own ability.

An alternative to the 'father-fixation' hypothesis, inevitably, is the popular interpretation of Stoker as a repressed homosexual, and *Dracula* as a scarcely concealed mobilisation of homoerotic desire. John D'Addario, for example, discerns a probably unconsummated homosexual attraction between Stoker and Irving, though surprisingly stops short of projecting the actor into the vampire as earlier critics had done.<sup>62</sup> D'Addario supports his contention by quoting some of the admittedly fulsome prose with which the author eulogised his late employer in *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving*. Stoker's rhetoric in his biography of Irving, though, pales somewhat when laid beside the letters which he sent to the American poet Walt Whitman whilst still an undergraduate at Trinity College Dublin. Stoker is discreet about these in his biography of Irving, and quotes only Whitman's affectionate reply.<sup>63</sup> Stoker's earliest letter to the poet, dated 18 February 1872, which did not come into the public domain until some 40 years after its writer's death, is somewhat more revealing, though. It is not so much the way in which Stoker draws attention to his own physique – 'I am six feet two inches high and twelve stone weight naked', 'a mighty graphic picture', according to the elderly Whitman – but rather the manner in which he projects his future relationship with the poet that is striking. His emphasised candour concludes with the statement: 'How sweet a thing it is for a strong healthy man with a woman's eyes and a child's wishes to feel that he can speak so to a man who can be if he wishes father, and brother and wife to his soul.'<sup>64</sup> Stoker's words, the emotional and probably spontaneous outpourings of a young man, were never meant for public consumption. Though much might be made of them

in criticism, it is as well to remember that the context of these is again one of isolation – Stoker, the defender of Whitman’s verse against moral censure, Stoker the underachieving second son seeking the reflected glory of patrician over-achievers, Stoker the struggling writer addressing a distant role model.<sup>65</sup>

Oscar Wilde, a contemporary of the author in both Dublin and London, has inevitably become another focus of the speculation surrounding Stoker’s sexuality. Stoker, notably, avoids any acknowledgement of the disgraced Wilde in his biography of Irving, though the dramatist was an occasional visitor to both the Stoker house and the Lyceum. Talia Schaffer’s identification of ‘codes for the closet’ in *Dracula*, and her suggestion that the author was conscious of an unspeakable ‘secret affinity with Wilde’ which he somehow exorcised in the novel is ingenious, but marginalises possibly the central premise for the perceived coolness between the two Dubliners. Florence Stoker had previously been courted by Wilde, who had drawn a portrait of her and presented her with a gold cross, which she returned on her engagement to Stoker at Wilde’s request.<sup>66</sup> Barbara Belford suggests that both Stoker and Wilde perversely eroticised Balcombe as a paragon of ‘chaste womanhood’, though more provocative female figures, beguiling though cold as death, are to be found in their major published works from Wilde’s *Salomé* (1891, in French; English trans. 1894) to *Dracula*.<sup>67</sup>

Florence Stoker, in the eyes of some critics, is intimate to both the misogyny of *Dracula* and the sexually assertive female vampires who people its pages. Daniel Farson, writing in 1975, casually reported Stoker’s granddaughter’s opinion that ‘Florence refused to have sex with Bram after her father was born’. This may well have been the case, given the absence of reliable contraception. Whether this might evidence what Farson terms ‘Bram’s sexual frustration’, and his recourse to prostitutes in London and Paris, cannot, however, be proved.<sup>68</sup> Equally impossible to prove is the assertion by Penelope Shuttle and Peter Redgrove ‘that a woman with an unsatisfactory sex life will have very bad menstrual disturbances’. Shuttle and Redgrove further query ‘Was it some image of these that gave Stoker’s subliminal mind the hint that formulated a myth of formidable power, out of the ferocity of a frustrated bleeding woman, crackling with energy and unacknowledged sexuality?’ ‘It is certainly possible’, as they suggest, though it is hardly provable. *Dracula* may indeed be read as ‘a menstrual narrative’, as Marie Mulvey-Roberts contends, but its status as an autobiography of Stoker’s sexual frustration, and a biography of his wife’s gynaecological health, remains somewhat less certain.<sup>69</sup>

The sexual health of the Stoker marriage, however, in turn informs the debate surrounding the author’s death in 1912. According to the certifying physician, the cause of death was ‘locomotor ataxy 6 months, granular contracted kidney, exhaustion’.<sup>70</sup> Harry Ludlam, mindful no

doubt of Edwardian eulogies which depicted Stoker as a ‘big, breathless, impetuous hurricane of a man’, stressed the concluding word, ‘exhaustion’.<sup>71</sup> This lay diagnosis was challenged, however, by Daniel Farson who, apparently under the guidance of a medical practitioner, interpreted the symptoms tabulated on the Certificate as indicative of a death caused by tertiary syphilis. Farson’s explanation for this was, inevitably, Stoker’s alleged marital celibacy – ‘his wife’s frigidity drove him to other women, probably prostitutes among them’. This is all very convenient, given the depiction of sexual vampires and ‘suddenly sexual women’, to borrow a phrase from Phyllis Roth, in *Dracula*. Stoker’s adultery, apparently, ‘created a sense of guilt’, so much so that, following his alleged and undated infection, ‘Bram’s writing showed signs of sexual guilt and frustration’.<sup>72</sup> Farson’s certainty has been disputed by subsequent biographers, Shepard and Belford among them. Haining and Tremayne, and Paul Murray, Stoker’s most recent biographer, are more equivocal.<sup>73</sup> It has to be said, though, that the syphilis hypothesis derives much of its longevity from the critical sexualisation of the vampiric act in the novel, and the convenient association of both illicit sexuality and vampirism with progressive personal exhaustion and eventual demise. The twentieth and twenty-first centuries, it would appear, still need reassurance of the repressed sexualities of their Victorian ancestors.

## CRITICISING *DRACULA* IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

This Guide is, at its heart, a survey of almost 50 years of academic criticism of *Dracula*. In this context, it considers both the predominant orthodoxies of thought and the various challenges to their primacy. The risk associated with a volume of this type is, inevitably, that a further orthodoxy of critical readings might be exemplified, or an existing one concretised, within its pages. That risk, though, is offset by the continually developing field of criticism in which *Dracula* plays variously a central or an important role. This Guide will equip the reader with the essential critical contexts upon which the ongoing debate is founded. Thus, the tendencies, and indeed the critics, discussed in the five chapters that follow can – and ought to be – supplemented, compared and contextualised through reference to works published progressively from the first decade of the twenty-first century. There is a further imperative, though, that ought rightly to be imposed upon those who write about *Dracula* at all levels, from the undergraduate essay to the academic monograph. The critical response to *Dracula* has historically been too dependent upon a limited range of admittedly spectacular episodes extracted from the novel, whilst certain aspects of Stoker’s work remain under-explored and thus still ripe for exploitation. Much, for example,

has been written upon Lucy Westenra's fantasy of marrying all three of her suitors, and even more upon her despatch – alternately ritualised or sexualised – at the hands of her fiancé in a London churchyard, yet there has been relatively little consideration of the lunatic Renfield's meeting with Mina Harker, or indeed the pathology, subject in the novel to a post-mortem, of the former's physical demise at the hands of the Count. The possibilities for expansion into new readings of *Dracula*, in other words, remain very much open. It is to be hoped that criticism in the twenty-first century is emboldened to move beyond the limits unwittingly imposed by the twentieth.

The current volume thus represents a starting point for further criticism based upon an understanding of the critical field as it is constituted in the first decade of the twenty-first century: it does not represent a closure. Its overviews anticipate the future as well as assessing the past. The thematic organisation of this Guide has been suggested by the manner in which the novel is most likely to be utilised, particularly by the undergraduate reader. It is not a linear critical history of *Dracula*, for such a work would be of little use to the majority of academic readers. Rather, it is an index to 48 years of research in a field where older work is at times referenced as frequently as more recent publications. The thematic structure further facilitates reader access to relevant issues without inhibiting cross-referencing and comparison. The division is not strictly along the lines of theory, as significant critical concerns such as sexuality and gender are, inevitably, subject to the scrutiny of diverse analytical tools. Rather, the five significant and recurrent focuses of *Dracula* criticism identified in this volume – psychoanalysis and the unconscious, the corporeal body, the imperial and domestic politics of the novel, Irish Studies and gender – all embody a breadth of theoretical perspectives. Though the chapters may, of course, be read independently of each other, a judicious use of both the detailed summaries provided on the Contents pages and of the Index is strongly advised. Just as the juxtaposition of two or more fictional texts may add depth to an argument so, too, does the acknowledgement of methodological confluence or dissent. It is all too easy to stay rigidly within a single, easily identified theoretical area – though this is thankfully something which many critics of *Dracula* have historically resisted. *Dracula*, a novel which is both thematically rich and critically well supported, remains an ideal subject for analysis. The critical possibilities of *Dracula*, and the range of theories that might well be applied to it, are far from exhausted.



The psychological theories developed by Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) are central to the earliest published academic responses to *Dracula*.

It is appropriate, therefore, that this Guide begins with a survey of psychoanalytical criticism between 1959 and 2002. The opening chapter will consider not merely the critical interplay between the relatively orthodox Freudian analyses of Maurice Richardson, Phyllis Roth and others, but will examine also how subsequent theories of repression and taboo have been successfully applied to *Dracula*. This chapter represents essential reading even for critics who deliberately distance themselves from the assumptions and conclusions of Richardson and his successors: psychoanalysis remains, for many *Dracula* critics, the theoretical standard against which their own methodological originality may be most graphically demonstrated. A knowledge of the landmarks of the psychoanalytical commentary upon *Dracula* thus remains crucial for those who would appreciate the contextual richness of both the novel *and* its criticism.

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